

ABSTRACT

A security method uses a single stored object as both an MPEG4 object for video compression, and for user identification and security. An authorized user video image is digitized to create corresponding authorized user identity data, which is stored as pixel data. A method is provided using the authorized user video image as a reference image for compression techniques. A stored image difference threshold level, defines the required degree of image match necessary. A present user video image is received, and digitized to create corresponding present user identity data. Image differences, between the present user video image and the authorized user video image are determined and compared to the image difference threshold level to determine whether to permit device usage. In one embodiment, video images are stored in MPEG4 format. The protected device is disabled when differences between a present user video image and an authorized user video image exceed threshold level. Alternate user authorization is optionally requested if image authentication fails. A present user video image is optionally stored or transmitted to a monitoring station if video authentication fails. Motion in present user video image is optionally detected as a prerequisite to authentication. An apparatus for carrying out the video security and compression methods is provided.